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Contract awarded for IF Directorate Research Facility

by Fran Crumb, Information Directorate

ROME, N.Y. — Atkins Benham Constructors of Oklahoma City, Okla., has been awarded a \$19,698,968 contract for construction of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) Information Directorate Research Facility at the Griffiss Business & Technology Park.

The new 105,000-square-foot facility will be the centerpiece of a unique, \$24.8 million partnership between the Air Force and New York State.

Congressionally-approved, it is the result of joint funding and support by the Air Force Military Construction Program and the state's Empire State Development Corp.

The contract was awarded by Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Philadelphia, Pa., which is responsible for administering military construction in the Northeast. Construction of the laboratory building is expected to begin next month and be completed by July 2003.

The new building is the second phase of a consolidation plan that will result in a state-of-the-art laboratory and research facility. The first phase of the program was recently completed

and consisted of demolition of approximately 200,000 square feet of space in the east wing and "headhouse," or front portion, of Building 2. The building is a sprawling World War II era warehouse. The west wing of the structure has been remodeled and occupied by directorate support offices as a result of the 1993 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRACC) decision on the former Griffiss Air Force Base.

The consolidation will create a building complex housing the Information Directorate's technical divisions. That complex, along with the existing Building 106, will become the principle area of directorate operations. The directorate will vacate three existing buildings located about a half mile from the proposed core area. In addition, security personnel will relocate from current facilities in a fourth building.

The goal of this new research facility is to enhance research collaboration among the directorate staff in a state-of-the-art research environment. The total project cost also includes modifications to the existing Building 3 and site enhancements. @